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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
U.S. BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
WASHINGTON, D. C.

August 24, 1943

1943 TURKEY CROP THE SAME AS LAST YEAR

About the same number of turkeys will be raised this year as last -- 33,069,000 birds or 3 percent less than the record crop of 1940 but 22 percent above the 5-year (1935-39) average, according to preliminary estimates of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Producers' intentions last February pointed to a 11 percent increase in the turkey crop this year. Various factors have made it impossible to achieve this increase. A reduction of animal protein in breeding mashes, especially on the Pacific Coast, where a large part of the hatching eggs are produced, resulted in low fertility and poor hatchability of eggs. Floods in the mid-west, cold wet weather in the south and a late spring in the northern tier of states delayed the egg laying and hatching season and caused considerable death loss from disease, exposure and drowning. Predatory animals, have taken a much larger than usual toll of breeders and poult's because of ammunition shortage and a consequent curtailment of hunting. Low protein growing mashes have retarded growth of poult's somewhat and may delay fall marketings. Possibilities of a feed shortage in some areas are giving producers considerable concern. As a result of these unfavorable conditions the number of turkeys raised this year is much below earlier expectations.

More turkey eggs were set than in 1942, but because of low fertility and poor hatchability of the eggs, hatcheries were unable to produce enough poult's to fill their orders. The competition for hatching eggs was very keen everywhere and hatcheries near the source of supply got more than their usual share of hatching eggs. Pacific Coast hatcheries offered more for hatching eggs than the mid-Western, Eastern and Rocky Mountain hatcheries, which have normally obtained eggs from that area. The result of this unusual distribution of hatching eggs and poult's will probably encourage turkey producers in the mid-west to hold more breeders this year in order to insure for themselves the poult's they wish to raise next year.

Because of the holding of hatching eggs and poult's in the Western States the turkey crop is about 11 percent larger in that area than last year but 4 percent less than intended on February 1. Growing conditions were quite favorable in California but the season was a little late in Washington and Oregon. Storms during the early brooding season in Utah killed many poult's. The hatchability of eggs was lower and death losses heavier than usual.

In the North Atlantic States the turkey crop is 1 percent larger than last year, the largest crop of record but 16 percent smaller than was intended on February 1. Scarcity of poult's and an impending tight feed situation tended to discourage producers. Hatcherymen report that breeder hens laid fewer eggs than usual in some sections and the hatchability was substantially below normal. As a result many farmers obtained late hatched poult's or none at all. Death losses have been heavier than usual and poult's are backward.

In the East North Central States the turkey crop is about the same as the peak number of last year but growers could not reach the 13 percent increase they intended in February. Loss of skilled labor in hatcheries and on large turkey farms, shortage of high protein feed and heavier than average losses by foxes and dogs also held down production.

The largest decrease in the number of turkeys raised this year is 9 percent in the West North Central States, which will give the smallest crop in this area since 1938 -- 16 percent below the record crop of 1940 and 18 percent below what they intended to produce on February 1. Conditions similar to those prevailing elsewhere contributed to a decrease. Unfavorable cold wet weather in May and June caused rather heavy death losses and retarded the growth of poultts.

The turkey crop in the South Atlantic States shows a decrease of about 3 percent below last year and 12 percent below intentions last February but 10 percent above the 5-year average. Hatcheries could not meet the demand for early poultts and more than the usual number of late poultts were produced. Cold wet weather resulted in a heavy death loss of poultts.

The number of turkeys raised in the South Central States is about 3 percent less than last year and 6 percent less than their intentions indicated last February. A cold wet spring and some shortage of turkey feeds resulted in low egg production and poor fertility. Death losses were much heavier than usual from disease and predatory animals.

Marketings About Same as Last Year

Turkey marketings this year are expected to be about the same as last year, with 52.1 of the crop intended to move in November or earlier compared with 52.9 percent last year. Marketings intended for October or earlier this year are 10.8 percent of the crop as against 11.8 percent so marketed last year. Christmas and New Year's markets are expected to receive 35.7 percent of the crop compared with 36.3 percent last year and after holiday market 12.2 percent compared with 10.8 percent last year.

The actual proportions that will move in successive months will depend to a considerable extent upon later developments. Actual marketings may vary somewhat from intended marketings. Last year actual marketings were about the same as intended marketings while in 1940 and 1941 they were somewhat later than expected. A scarcity of feed with lower than usual protein content may retard the growth of young turkeys this year and delay marketing somewhat.

Turkey marketings are expected to begin earliest in the West North Central States followed by the East North Central States. The West North Central area expects to market 18.4 percent of their turkey crop in October and earlier and the East North Central 11.9 percent.

The percent of the crop marketed by Thanksgiving varies from 59.3 percent in the West North Central States to 42 percent in the West.

The largest percentage of marketings after the first of the year -- 22.5 percent -- is reported in the West, where a relatively large proportion of the market birds are of the broadbreasted type raised to heavy weights for hotel and restaurant trade. The South Atlantic States report the smallest relative marketings after the first of the year of 4.4 percent.

(See table on page 4.)

INDICATED NUMBER OF TURKEYS RAISED IN 1943 AND PAST YEARS

State and Division	Average 1935-39	Number Raised			Number on hand Aug. 1, 1943	Indicated Number Raised in 1943
		1940	1941	1942 1/		
		Thousands			Percent	
Me.	43	50	44	48	90	43
N.H.	45	58	65	69	93	64
Vt.	95	146	155	153	105	161
Mass.	194	217	224	240	90	216
R.I.	22	21	22	25	105	26
Conn.	84	103	95	114	103	117
N.Y.	328	400	420	420	92	386
N.J.	122	126	120	138	120	166
Pa.	632	828	927	1,020	105	1,071
N. ATL.	1,566	1,949	2,072	2,227	101.0	2,250
Ohio	674	948	815	896	90	806
Ind.	357	448	358	394	115	453
Ill.	400	589	630	662	92	609
Mich.	448	463	472	472	110	519
Wis.	344	444	462	504	110	554
E.N. CENT.	2,223	2,892	2,737	2,928	100.4	2,941
Minn.	2,216	3,025	3,207	3,207	93	2,983
Iowa	1,330	1,713	1,782	1,729	108	1,867
Mo.	1,065	1,575	1,544	1,359	98	1,332
N. Dak.	1,369	1,670	1,303	1,212	65	788
S. Dak.	840	1,404	1,250	950	75	712
Nebr.	640	1,176	1,200	1,260	95	1,197
Kans.	828	1,205	1,157	1,064	90	958
W. N. CENT.	8,288	11,768	11,443	10,781	91.2	9,837
Del.	113	110	121	113	80	90
Md.	402	413	405	405	100	405
Va.	730	805	805	902	95	857
W. Va.	235	225	225	270	87	235
N.C.	234	239	239	268	95	255
S.C.	143	160	142	155	115	178
Ga.	123	115	117	140	120	168
Fla.	119	120	115	115	104	120
S. ATL.	2,099	2,187	2,169	2,368	97.5	2,308
Ky.	380	310	310	310	82	254
Tenn.	212	201	213	196	100	196
Ala.	139	129	155	170	95	162
Miss.	117	116	139	143	87	124
Ark.	100	125	131	140	90	126
La.	64	65	66	61	110	67
Okla.	1,411	1,500	1,275	1,122	85	954
Tex.	3,834	4,399	3,651	3,724	103	3,836
S. CENT.	6,259	6,845	5,940	5,866	97.5	5,719
Mont.	299	271	276	276	89	246
Idaho	247	225	248	273	85	232
Wyo.	251	203	173	176	90	158
Colo.	743	920	846	888	97	861
N. Mex.	79	60	52	55	100	55
Ariz.	88	68	61	81	115	93
Utah	587	816	857	1,166	115	1,341
Nev.	66	47	38	25	135	34
Wash.	441	905	996	1,096	110	1,206
Oreg.	1,306	1,709	1,726	1,812	115	2,084
Calif.	2,464	3,359	3,527	3,139	118	3,704
WEST.	6,572	8,583	8,800	8,987	111.4	10,014
U.S.	27,006	34,224	33,161	33,157	99.7	33,069

1/ Revised.

2/ Preliminary estimates as of August 1, 1943.

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PROPORTION OF TURKEY CROP MARKETED IN DIFFERENT MONTHS
(Reporters' averages)

GEOGRAPHIC	1942 Crop			1943 Crop (intended)		
	Oct. or earlier	Nov.	Dec.	Jan. or later	Oct. or earlier	Nov.
Percent						
N.Atlantic	8.0	44.4	37.4	10.2	7.6	44.8
E.N.Central	9.8	44.4	36.8	9.0	11.9	42.0
W.N.Central	18.3	42.3	32.5	6.9	18.4	40.9
S.Atlantic	10.7	48.2	35.7	5.4	7.5	48.8
S.Central	4.3	50.8	39.6	5.3	3.0	49.0
Western	10.8	29.9	38.5	20.8	7.9	34.1
United States	11.8	41.1	36.3	10.8	10.8	41.3
						35.7
						12.2

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